

Having described the invention, the following is claimed:

1. A container for holding powdered reagents that interact with water to form an anti-microbial fluid for use in an apparatus for cleaning and microbially deactivating items, comprised of:

a rigid container having a fluid inlet connectable to a source of water on an apparatus for cleaning and microbially deactivating items and a fluid outlet in fluid communication with items to be microbially deactivated;

a continuous fluid passage through said container between said fluid inlet and said fluid outlet;

a plurality of spaced-apart barrier elements disposed within said fluid passage to define a plurality of isolated compartments within said container, said barrier element being impervious to powdered reagents, but permeable to said chemical reagents when dissolved in a liquid; and

a first dry, powdered reagent within one of said compartments for forming an anti-microbial solution when water flows through said container.

2. A container as defined in claim 1, wherein said container is formed of a molded polymer material.

3. A container as defined in claim 1, further comprising a removable, moisture barrier covering said fluid inlet and said fluid outlet.

4. A container as defined in claim 3, further comprising a removable desiccant material in said passage.

5. A container as defined in claim 4, wherein said desiccant material is in said passage at said fluid outlet.

6. A container as defined in claim 1, wherein said container is generally cylindrical in shape.

7. A container as defined in claim 2, wherein said barrier elements are formed of a porous polymer material.

8. A container as defined in claim 7, wherein said barrier elements are formed of an ethylene-based polymer.

9. A container as defined in claim 7, wherein said barrier elements are size exclusive filters.

10. A container as defined in claim 1, wherein said container has two compartments and one of said compartments holds an acid precursor.

11. A container as defined in claim 10, wherein said acid precursor includes acetylsalicylic acid.

12. A container as defined in claim 9, wherein said barrier element adjacent said fluid outlet includes a microbial filter layer that filters particles having a size of  $.1\mu$  or greater from fluid passing through said container.

13. A container as defined in claim 1, wherein said container includes a first compartment disposed between said fluid inlet and said fluid outlet, and a second compartment disposed between said first compartment and said fluid outlet, said first compartment containing a first dry reagent and said second compartment containing a second dry reagent.

14. An apparatus for microbially deactivating instruments and devices, said apparatus comprised of:

- a circulation system for selectively circulating water and an anti-microbial fluid through a chamber for holding instruments and devices to be microbially deactivated, said chamber forming a portion of said circulation system;

- a chemical delivery container for holding powdered reagents that interact with water to form an anti-microbial fluid, said container having:

- a plurality of compartments for holding said powdered chemical reagents,

- a continuous fluid passage extending through said container between a fluid inlet and a fluid outlet, said passage extending through said compartments,

- porous barrier elements disposed along said passage isolating one compartment from another compartment and isolating said compartments from said fluid inlet and said fluid outlet, said barrier elements being impervious to said powdered reagents, but permeable to said reagents when dissolved in water; and

- a cavity in said apparatus for receiving said chemical delivery container, said cavity having a fluid line connectable to a source of water in communication with said cavity, said fluid line being connectable to said fluid inlet on said container when said container is disposed within said cavity, wherein water from said source of water may be forced into said container through said fluid inlet to interact with said chemical reagents in said container.